

Message Text

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21

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SUBJ: LOCAL REACTION TO RUMORS OF REVERSION OF PORTION OF
FLEACTS SASEBO

SUMMARY: LOCAL NEWSPAPER REPORTED THAT ONLY ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF
FLEACTS, SASEBO, WOULD BE REVERTED NEXT YEAR, MUCH SMALLER PORTION
THAT PAPER SAID HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN EXPECTED. PRELIMINARY
SOUNDINGS INDICATE RESIDENTS OF SASEBO CITY AND NAGASAKI PREFECTURE

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DISSATISFIED WITH GETTING LESS THAN THEY HAD EXPECTED, AND FEAR
MSDF WILL TAKE ANY THAT IS REVERTED. USUAL ROUNDS OF VISITS TO
U.S. AND JAPANESE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH PROBLEM BY SASEBO MAYOR
SEEMS HIGHLY LIKELY. END SUMMARY.

LEAD ARTICLE IN OCTOBER 20 NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN REPORTED THAT ANY
LARGE SCALE REVERSION OF FACILITIES AT FLEET ACTIVITIES, SASEBO, HAD
BEEN SHELVED FOR TIME BEING. STORY, WHICH DID NOT APPEAR IN LOCAL
EDITIONS OF NATIONAL PAPERS, SAID THAT FAR FROM BEING THE
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LARGE SCALE REVERSION RUMOR (AND MAYOR TSUJI) HAD PREDICTED, LAND

TO BE GIVEN UP BY FLEACTS WOULD INCLUDE ONLY MOVIE THEATER, SOME WAREHOUSES, AND CERTAIN HOUSING, CONSISTING OF ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF TOTAL AREA OF BASE.

ARTICLE SAYS SASEBO CITY IS DISSATISFIED WITH REVERSION PLAN AND INTENDS TO PUSH DFAA TO HELP CITY GET MORE, PARTICULARLY NIMITZ PARK. STORY PREDICTS THAT EVENTUALLY GREATER REVERSION, PARTICULARLY NIMITZ PARK OR PART OF IT, WILL BE PUT BEFORE JOINT COMMITTEE. STORY ENDS BY SAYING THAT WHILE YOKOSUKA WILL REMAIN THE KEY POINT IN JAPAN FOR THE SEVENTH FLEET, SASEBO IS IMPORTANT FOR ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE. IT ADDS THAT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AND DFAA DIRECTOR SAKATA HAD UNDERLINED

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IMPORTANCE OF SASEBO FOR THIS FUNCTION IN CASE OF TROUBLE ON KOREAN PENINSULA.

PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS OF OPINION IN SASEBO CITY AND NAGASAKI PREFECTURE INDICATE DISAPPOINTMENT IN REDUCTION OF WHAT THEY HAD THOUGHT WOULD BE LARGE-SCALE REVERSION. AN OFFICIAL OF THE SASEBO CITY LIAISON OFFICE TOLD US THAT HE THOUGHT THE ARTICLE WAS PROBABLY NOT TRUE. HOWEVER, IF IT WAS, IT WILL BE A REAL BLOW TO THE CITY. THE OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE MSDF WOULD PROBABLY TAKE OVER WHATEVER WAS REVERTED, AND ANY WORKERS LAID OFF WOULD ADD TO SASEBO'S UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM. WHAT THE CITY REALLY WANTS, THE OFFICIAL ADDED, IS ALL OR PART OF NIMITZ PARK, WHERE THEY WOULD LIKE TO CONSTRUCT A HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE AND FIRE-FIGHTING FACILITY. IF THE CITY GOT EVEN PART OF NIMITZ PARK, HE SAID, IT WOULD BE A TREMENDOUS BOOST FOR SASEBO.

AN OFFICIAL OF THE NAGASAKI PREFECTURAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT ESSENTIALLY AGREED WITH THE LIAISON OFFICE OFFICIAL THAT PEOPLE WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED WITH THE REDUCED SCALE OF REVERSION, IF THE NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN STORY WERE, IN FACT, TRUE. THE PREFECTURAL OFFICIAL SAID THAT MOST PEOPLE FEEL THAT FACILITIES AT FLEACTS ARE UNDER-UTILIZED AND THAT A GREAT DEAL MORE

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THAN 20 PERCENT COULD BE REVERTED. LIKE THE CITY OFFICIAL, HE CONFIDENTIAL

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SAID THE PEOPLE ARE PARTICULARLY WORRIED THAT THE MSDF WOULD GET MOST OR ALL OF ANYTHING REVERTED.

ALTHOUGH IT DID NOT APPEAR IN THE FUKUOKA EDITION OF THE NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN, AN ARTICLE IN THE OCTOBER 21 SASEBO EDITION OF THE PAPER EMPHASIED THE DISSATISFACTION THE PREVIOUS DAY'S STORY HAD CAUSED. MAYOR TSUJI WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT IF THE REPORT WERE TRUE, THE CITY'S "MASTER PLAN" WOULD BE DISLOCATED. THE MAYOR SAID "THESE TWO FACILITIES (TATEGAMI PIER AND NIMITZ PARK)

ARE INDISPENSABLE. I'M UPSET WITH THE REVERSION PLAN WHICH CHANGES CONSTANTLY (NEKO NO ME NO YOONI)". ZEN CHU RO PREDICTABLY ANNOUNCED THEIR OPPOSITION, AND THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SAID "THE DELAY IN REVERSION WILL SHAKE THE VERY ROOTS OF THE CITY'S ECONOMY."

COMMENT: WE HAVE OBSERVED SASEBO MAYOR ICHIZO TSUJI'S PEREGRINATIONS IN REGARD TO THE REVERSION OF FLEACTS FACILITIES WITH PROFOUND AHMIRATION FOR HIS SKILL AT MANIPULATION. TSUJI, AS ILLUSTRATED DURING THE SAKIBE REVERSION OF 1973, IS A MASTER AT PLAYING OFF VARIOUS CONCERNED PARTIES AGAINST EACH OTHER, ALWAYS PRESENTING THE PREVIOUS CONTACT'S POSITION AS BEING SLIGHTLY MORE FAVORABLE

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TO TSUJI'S THAT IT IN FACT WAS. WHILE WE CONFESS IGNORANCE OF THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE JAPANESE AGENCIES CONCERNED, AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, THOSE OF THE AMERICAN SIDE, WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION TSUJI PLAYED A MUCH GREATER ROLE IN THE SAKIBE REVERSION THAN ONE WOULD ORDINARILY EXPECT. ALL U.S. (AND JAPANESE) PARTIES TO NEGOTIATIONS COVERING THE REVERSION NEGOTIATIONS OF FLEACTS CAN BRACE THEMSELVES FOR ANOTHER ROUND OF VISITS BY THE ENERGETIC MAYOR, IT'S COMING. END COMMENT.

RICHARDSON

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